News release

Driving home the winter message

12 November 2004

Safer roads, more reliable journeys and better informed travellers are the aims of a new joint initiative from the Met Office and the Highways Agency this winter.

The new collaboration was unveiled today at the Highways Agency's National Traffic Control Centre (NTCC) near Birmingham. Combining the expertise of both organisations and utilising new technology, it is expected that drivers will be better prepared than ever, to cope with whatever weather the winter may bring.

The Met Office and the Highways Agency have a long association, working together on the established winter road maintenance programme, but this new initiative puts a dedicated Met Office team at the heart of HA operations.

Three forecasters, led by Dick Porter, will provide a single point of contact within the Highways Agency for any weather-related events. It will also support the agency in delivering consistent messages about weather impacts on the road network.

Archie Robertson, the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency, who along with Roger Hunt, the Met Office's Chief Operating Officer introduced the initiative at the NTCC said, "we want to be prepared to give road users the best possible information on weather and driving conditions in their area and on the network as a whole".

Roger Hunt also welcomed the scheme, saying, "this is an important first step in increasing co-operation in the long-term between the Met Office and the Highways Agency. The Met Office team is aimed at helping the Highways Agency provide more relevant and timely information on the road network to drivers".

For further information:
Met Office Press Office +44 (0)1392 886655
E-mail: pressoffice@metoffice.gov.uk

Met Office Customer Centre 0870 900 0100
If you're outside the UK +44 (0)1392 885680

© Crown copyright